

- Geothlypis trichas*. MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT.—Rare.
Sylvania canadensis. CANADIAN WARBLER.—Occurring occasionally.
Setophaga ruticilla. REDSTART.—Common.
Troglodytes hiemalis. WINTER WREN. Abundant locally.
Sitta canadensis. RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH.—Quite common, with young just on wing.
Parus atricapillus. BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE.—Not uncommon.
Parus hudsonicus. HUDSONIAN CHICKADEE.—Not uncommon.
Turdus aonalaschkæ pallasii. HERMIT THRUSH.—Observed everywhere.
Merula migratoria. ROBIN.—Very common.
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NOTES ON WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA BIRDS.

BY W. A. JEFFRIES AND J. A. JEFFRIES.

ON the 14th of May, 1888, with the prospect of two weeks to ourselves, we arrived at Sylva in Jackson County, North Carolina. Sylva is a small settlement on Scott's Creek, about three miles above its junction with the Tuckassegee, a tributary of the Tennessee, at an elevation of 2000 feet. The Plott Balsams on the north and northeast, rise to 5000 and 6000 feet. King's Mountain, due south, is 3000 feet high.

The valleys in the neighborhood are all cleared and planted, usually to corn; grass is a rarity. Heavy timber covers the hillsides, dotted here and there with clearings, or patches of tall charred trunks affording good feeding grounds for *Colaptes auratus* and *Ceophlæus pileatus*. The life of a hillside farm is short, owing to the crude methods of the farmer. The surface of the soil is little more than scratched with a 'bull tongue' plough: a heavy plough suitable for such work is unknown. This results in bad washing of the soil, which soon becomes too much gullied for service.

On the 14th, immediately after our first futile attempt to make a meal off native fare, we hired horses and rode for twenty miles, going towards the northeast. On this ride we saw two Robins; three Robins only were seen by us below Franklin. We saw also several flocks of from six to twenty *Spinus tristis*; similar flocks

were seen for the next ten days. Soon after sundown the temperature fell rapidly, a sharp frost destroying the newly set apples, and killing the entire crop of beans, a staple of the country.

May 15 we drove down the creek, following the road running at the base of the hills to Dillsborough. On the shore of the creek in the village a pair of *Actitis macularia* had settled down for the summer. Three or four pairs of *Tyrannus tyrannus* were seen in orchards but were not common.

Thickets along the river bank were well tenanted by *Galeoscoptes carolinensis*. *Thryothorus ludovicianus* pre-empted many of the old willow stumps. *Sayornis phæbe* seemed to be breeding, yet we could not find a nest. *Empidonax acadicus*, *Cardinalis cardinalis*, and a few *Vireo noveboracensis* were also resident.

The second growth along the roadside was alive with *Vireo olivaceus*. We believe the total numbers of this species to equal that of any found by us; as far as Franklin it was the bird of the woods and second growth. *Spizella socialis*, then breeding, was abundant, working well into the woods, where we took several on foggy days, not being able to make certain of our bird without. Nearly all specimens were curiously stained below, presumably by the reddish soil. *Parus carolinensis* seemed to be the regular form of Chickadee, yet *P. atricapillus* was taken on May 15, a little below Sylva, on the brushy edge of a hillside covered by a second growth of oaks and scattered pines. A few *Poliophtila cærulea* and *Dendroica æstiva* were noted.

Passing through Dillsborough, our road ran for some distance along the Tuckaseegee. *Clivicola riparia* and *Chætura pelagica* were abundant. We failed, during our stay, to take a single specimen of the Rough-winged Swallow, which, if present, must have been rare. On the afternoon of the 15th it began raining and continued, with rare intervals of sunshine between heavy showers, until May 25. This interfered seriously with our collecting, driving the birds to shelter and silencing them.

The flight of warblers did not pass entirely until the 19th. Before that date we took *Dendroica maculosa*, *D. striata*, *D. blackburniæ*, *D. dominica*, *D. virens*, and *D. æstiva* (resident). *D. pennsylvanica* was seen but not taken.

Cuckoos, locally known as 'rain crows,' were abundant, *C. americanus* and *C. erythrophthalmus* being present in seem-

ingly equal numbers. *C. americanus* nested May 23. Their notes, in suitable places, could be heard hourly during our stay. *Myiarchus crinitus*, *Parus bicolor*, *Mniotilta varia*, *Contopus virens*, *Setophaga ruticilla*, *Spizella pusilla*, *Colinus virginianus*, *Passerina cyanea*, were among the common forms. *Cathartes aura*, *Corvus americanus*, and *Trochilus colubris* were not common. *Pipilo erythrophthalmus*, much disliked by the farmers, showed a decided preference for the borders of corn fields.

Our endeavors to find the Mockingbird were not successful. The bird was said to be common; several times we were told that a 'mocker' was in a certain place and sang all night. Several tramps after the 'mocker' proved the bird so called was either a Brown Thrasher or a Chat. Men who had lived in Sylva for years, moving from the coast, assured us that the 'gray mocker' had never been seen by them, although the 'mockingbird' was not rare.

Our negative evidence on the Wild Turkey would show that although formerly abundant it is now certainly rare. A man driving the year round for a living for over three years, going often as far as Highlands, said he had never seen one yet. The capture of a Wild Turkey is town talk for six months. At Franklin, though assured it was common, we concluded that a single brood only was the cause of all the stories we heard.

Our drives and walks brought to light the following birds: *Sialia sialis*, *Turdus fuscescens*, *Dryobates pubescens*, *Empidonax minimus*, *Sitta carolinensis*, *Icterus galbula*, and *Geothlypis trichas*.

May 24 we drove to Franklin; the day was hot but beautifully clear. *Turdus mustelinus*, nowhere rare, became abundant as we ascended; several nests were taken on the very edge of the road in plain sight of every passer by.

Leaving Franklin, May 25, on the way to Highlands, we met our first *Thryothorus bewickii*, and took a female *Junco hyemalis* just outside Franklin, at the roadside; it was alone. This specimen is decidedly brownish above, least so on back of occiput and head, most so across shoulders, which contrast distinctly with the grayish blue of neck. Franklin is much lower than Highlands, where we saw many *Junco hyemalis carolinensis*, and took a pair.

On making sufficient elevation to find Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and Robins, a decided increase both of numbers and species at any one spot was easily noticeable. This increase held good until a lower level beyond Highlands was reached.

Vireo solitarius alticola was easily found by its song in the open hard woods of the tableland near Highlands, where most of our birds were seen, though found also at an elevation approximately 500 feet lower as we left the plateau. They proved shy, flying from tree-top to tree-top well out of range. A single specimen reminds us strongly of *V. cassinii* as taken at Santa Barbara, California.

At the level of Highlands, exactly such species as Mr. Brewster has previously mentioned were taken, and none other. *Contopus borealis* was still on his hemlock-top, and rhododendron swamps through which the road was cut proved several times to be well filled with *Dendroica caerulescens*.

On leaving home our intentions were to go well into or over the 'Smokies,' but incessant rains and sickness finally drove us back to pure water. Few northern digestions could accomplish the feat of properly nourishing a man on native fare.

ADDITIONS TO THE CATALOGUE OF THE BIRDS OF KANSAS, WITH NOTES IN REGARD TO THEIR HABITS.

BY N. S. GOSS.

Æchmophorus occidentalis. WESTERN GREBE.—For this addition to our list, we are indebted to Prof. F. H. SNOW, who reports that a young male was killed November 3, 1887, on the Kansas River, at Lawrence.* The birds are quite common on the northwestern part of the continent, breeding in reeds, ponds, and lakes east to northern Dakota and Manitoba, wintering along the Pacific coast south into Lower California, but this capture is the first mention that I can find of their appearance east of the Rocky Mountains south of their breeding grounds. I have noticed this large species at San Diego several times, and in the winter and early

*See Auk, Vol. V, p. 201.